

## Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 OPR-02 OC-05 CCO-00 A-01

SY-05 EB-07 FEAE-00 INT-05 OES-03 TRSE-00 NEAE-00

SAM-01 ACDA-05 SCCT-01 SCA-01 DHA-02 /112 W

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O R 301455Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7898

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV WYRQU

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR VAIHI GEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

DIA WASHDC

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CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 15655

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: DAY OF BACKING AND FILLING

REF BEIRUT 15623 (1332Z)

1. SUMMARY: RELATIVE EUPHORIA (IF WORD STILL HAS MEANING IN LEBANON) NOTED IN LEBANESE CIRCLES DEC 29 DISSIPATED SIGNIFICANTLY OVERNIGHT AND MODD DEC 30 VARIES FROM DIS-APPOINTMENT TO GLOOM. SECURITY SITUATION REMAINS GENER-ALLY GOOD, WITH SOME MINOR CLASHES, SNIPING, ARSON AND A BRIEF FLURRY OF KIDNAPPINGS REPORTED, BUT POLITICAL SCENE ATTRACTS MOST ATTENTION. IT WAS PROSPECT OF FORWARD MOTION TOWARD POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WHICH UNDERGIRDDED YESTERDAY'S PROPENSITY TO HOPE THAT CURRENT CALM WAS SOMETHING MORE THAN MOMENTARY TRUCE. OBSERVERS WILL BE CAREFULLY WATCHING OUTCOME OF CABINET MEETING DEC 30 IN EFFORT TO GAIN HINT THAT POLITICAL PUSH IS STILL ON DESPITE UNSETTLING DEVELOPMENTS DEC 29. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION IN BEIRUT CONTINUES TO HOLD SO FAR DEC 30 BUT HIGHER COORDINATION COMMITTEE WAS UNABLE DEC 29 TO PURSUE EFFECTIVELY ITS OBJECTIVE OF REMOVING REMAINING ARMED MEN FROM STREETS FOLLOWING ERUPTION OF SKIRMISHES YESTERDAY AFTERNOON IN VICINITY OF MARTYRS SQUARE. COMMITTEE MEETS TO TRY AGAIN AT 1700 LOCAL DEC 30. SOME SHOOTING OCCURRED IN TRIPOLI OVERNIGHT BUT ZAHLE IS QUIET AND STAUZA-ZAHLE ROAD WAS OPENED TO TRAFFIC TODAY. SNIPERS IN SOME BEIRUT SUBURBS ARE REPORTEDLY MAKING MOVEMENT IN THOSE AREAS HAZARDOUS.

3. PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF INITIATIVE CALLED ON PRES FRANGIE DEC 29 AS ANTICIPATED TO OUTLINE "THEIR" PROPOSALS FOR POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION. ALTHOUGH FRANGIE REPORTEDLY RECEIVED PROPOSALS POSITIVELY YWN SOME AMBIGUITY HAS DEVELOPED IN PRESIDENT'S POSITION WHICH IS GEN-ERATING CONCERN THAT SYRIAN-SPONSORED POLITICAL EFFORT MAY  
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HAVE JUMPED THE TRACKS. FRANGIE IS NOW PUBLICLY TYING QUESTION OF DISTRIBUTION OF PARLIAMENTARY SEATS TO HOLDING OF NEW CENSUS OF LEBANESE POPULATION. HOOKER IN THIS APPROACH, OF COURSE, IS HIS INSISTENCE THAT EMIGRE POPULATION (PRE-DOMINANTLY CHRISTIAN) BE INCLUDED ON VOTING ROLLS. INITIA-TIVE COMMITTEE ALSO MADE PILGRIMAGE TO PRESENT FIVE POINTS TO PRIMIN KARAME WHO, NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, OPPOSED INCLUSION

OF OVERSEAS LEBANESE ON ROLLS. RELIABLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE PHALANGIST SOURCE INFORMED EMBOFF IN CONFIDENCE THAT IDEA OF CENSUS INCLUDING EMIGRES WAS ONE OF POINTS DISCUSSED IN DAMASCUS BY PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARY LUCIEN DAHDAH DURING HIS SECOND, SECRET VISIT (REFTEL). SOURCE SAID DAHDAH, WHO RETURNED TO BEIRUT EVENING DEC 29, FOUND SYRIANS WERE NOT RPT NOT BUYING. ACCORDING TO SAME SOURCE, EFFORTS CONTINUE DESPITE APPARENT SETBACKS, TO CENTER ON FIVE POINTS ON WHICH PIERRE GEMAYEL WILL ATTEMPT TO SOLIDIFY POSITIVE MARONITE POSITION WHEN HE MEETS DEC 31 WITH CHAMOUN, CHARLES MALEK AND CHARBEL KASSIS.

4. EVER-ERRASCIBLE, KAMAL JUMBLATT MADE HIS CONTRIBUTION TO TODAY'S DASHED HOPES BY ATTACKING KARAME, RESURFACING THE JOUNIEH BAY ARMS VESSEL CONTROVERSY OF EARLY NOV (DATT HAS LEARNED THAT ANOTHER SHIPLOAD OF CHRISTIAN ARMS IS DUE OFF JOUNIEH DEC 30), AND STATING THAT HE DID NOT SEE WHAT ANYONE WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT. COMMUNIST PARTY OF LEBANON (CPL GEORGE HAWI) ADDED TO EVERYONE'S CONFUSION BY ASSERTING THE "PROGRESSIVE FORCES" (PRESUMABLY INCLUDING THE CPL) WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO REPLACE LEBANON'S PRESENT "FEUDAL POLITICS" BY A "LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC CAPITALIST REGIME." SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE SPECULATED OFF THE CUFF THAT HAWI'S STATEMENT WAS MADE AT THE BEHEST OF JUMBLATT WHO IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM BOTH THE SYRIANS AND THE "MODERATE" PALESTINAIANS FOR RUNNING AROUND WITH THE COMMUNIST CROWD.

5. LOCAL PAPERS REPORT DEC 30 THAT ARAB LEAGUE SYG RIAD WILL COME TO BEIRUT WITHIN THE NEXT 48 HOURS. SUCH SPECULATION IS NOT RPT NOT YET CONFIRMED BUT SYRIA HAS INDIRECTLY MADE ITS OPPOSITION TO ARAB LEAGUE BUTTING IN KNOWN--THIS TIME THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF ZUHAYR MOHSEN, HEAD OF CONFIDENTIAL

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SYRIAN-SPONSORED SA'IQA. MOHSEN DISPUTED EGYPTIAN REPORTS THAT THE PLO HAD ACCEPTED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ARAB LEAGUE CONCLAVE; JUST THE OPPOSITE IS THE CASE, ACCORDING TO MOHSEN'S REMARKS.

6. PARALLELING IMPROVED SECURITY CONDITIONS, COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY INCREASED TODAY; HOWEVER, BANKS REMAINED CLOSED AND THERE ARE PRESS REPORTS OF EXTENSIVE LOOTING OF PORT WAREHOUSES. IF IMPROVED SECURITY HOLDS, PANAM PLANS TO RESUME BEIRUT SERVICE JAN 7. OIL MINISTRY DIRECTOR GENERAL CONFIRMS THAT IRAQIS WILL CONTINUE FLOW OF CRUDE TO IPC REFINERY AT TRIPOLI AFTER EXPIRATION OF LEBANESE-IRAQI AGREEMENT DEC 31. AFTER NEW AGREEMENT REACHED, PRICE PER BARREL WILL BE RETROACTIVE TO BEGINNING 1976. GODLEY

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## Message Attributes

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